

**Denholm**Associates

# Careering out of the crisis

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Your guide to a happier and  
more fulfilled working life.

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## Tip No. 4 **Create your personal brand**

“Personal branding is the process by which individuals differentiate themselves by identifying and articulating their unique value proposition, then leveraging it across platforms with a consistent message and image to achieve a specific goal. In this way, individuals can enhance their recognition as experts in their field, establish reputation and credibility and advance their careers.”

In other words, what people see, hear, experience and sense, all go towards building a picture of the kind of person you are.

Humans make judgments about one another relatively quickly, so it's important to show your audience clearly who you are and what you can offer. So it would be worth taking the time to review your CV and all your social



### **NICKI DENHOLM**

Nicki Denholm was the pioneer of specialist sales and marketing recruitment and has developed an unrivalled network at senior levels in Scotland and beyond. She successfully launched and developed Denholm into a widely respected and leading player within the UK market for providing top talent. She currently heads up Denholm Associates.



## Create your personal brand

media platforms. LinkedIn, in particular, focuses on professional networking and career development, so it is vital that you have the right message out there for your prospective audience.

### **You need to know what you're aiming for**

What are your goals in life and how might your ideal role help you achieve them? Try to think beyond salary. Often self-esteem, recognition and responsibility are just as important in helping people feel like they've achieved something in life. Knowing what you're aiming for makes that target easier to hit and gives you clear motivations at an interview.

### **Discover your marketability**

If you look at your professional knowledge, skills and abilities as though you were the employer, what conclusions would you draw? Add to this - your passions, hobbies, interests and you'll discover that just like a product, you are a marketable brand.

### **Perception test**

Just as the products on a supermarket shelf use packaging to help customers choose, you need to think about how you might be perceived by the wider world and what you can do to maximise your impact, beyond an interview. Equally, do your research on any future employer.

Find out if the company does what it says on the tin. What does their employer brand say about them?

### **First impressions count**

You only get one chance to make a first impression. In addition to any CV, employers and recruitment agencies will scan social media for further information. What will they find? Will it make them think more or less favourably? Will your online reputation, personal and professional relationships, help or hinder your application? The internet never forgets, so make sure you've done your homework around your future employer's needs and what they might be able to find out about you, ahead of an actual meeting. Think about the personality traits you might require to excel

in the job you're applying for. What unique skills could you bring that might make you stand out from the competition? And always look at your online self through the eyes of your potential employer.

### **Checklist**

Google yourself and review the entries - because your audience, future employees, will too! If you have social media accounts such as Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn, scan the last few months' worth of entries and make sure your profiles reflects a positive, professional message and are in line with what you are trying to achieve. We see so many talented people who are simply not selling themselves effectively enough for the role they are looking to be hired for. Now I know we Scots are often

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rather uncomfortable about blowing our own trumpets, but you need to see yourself the way you'd like others to see you. Whilst always being truthful and authentic.

## **Fake it 'til you make it**

The mantra of 'behave like you're already in the position you want' is a good one. How you market yourself communicates your brand to the waiting world and while you need to do this honestly, acting confidently, dressing appropriately and sounding knowledgeable, all go a long way to shaping perceptions.

People live and breathe brands but often personal brands are forgotten about or treated as an afterthought.

Remember, future employers

want to know that you are passionate about the job you're applying for and expect to find evidence of this on and offline. And these days this applies just as much to finance, HR and other key professionals for whom personal and communication skills count just as much as technical ability as they rise up the career ladder.

- Know and read relevant industry publications to stay informed
- Be involved in networking events related to your field
- Where relevant, participate in online groups and forums for your market
- Share valuable content and posts created by others, leave comments and join social media conversations. The

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more engaged you are, the better, but make sure it's appropriate to the job, market and/or industry you want to work in.

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**If you have any questions or would like to find out more about our Career Transitioning Support - please feel free to contact me directly.**

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